

AN
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OF THE
PRESENT STATE
OF
FRANCE,
AND OF THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE EVENTS
PASSING IN THAT KINGDOM.

BY THE AUTHOR OF
THE EXAMPLE OF FRANCE A WARNING TO BRITAIN.

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F R A N C I S

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THE events which have passed in France, during the last three years, have presented so new a spectacle, that the deepest and most penetrating politicians have been contented to express their amazement: few have presumed to foresee any result, and none to bring those events to the measure of any known principles that have hitherto seemed to govern the political world. The legislator and the mechanic have been equally stupified at so strange an assemblage of all that could mark the folly, the atrocity, and the energy, of mankind.

244.141

There are, however, some circumstances which may lead us to reason upon the question, and not altogether in the dark : these circumstances, though very generally known, have not perhaps been properly combined, or their probable effects stated with sufficient clearness.

The prominent features in the state of France, to which I would chiefly allude at present, are these : the armies very numerous, raised by force of *réquisition*, but said to be well-fed and supported.

The government, vibrating between the clubs and the Convention, subject to variations, occasioned by the rise and fall of certain parties, which possess by turns an influence with the people.

All the crops, products, and live stock, of the farmers, placed in a state of requisition for public use.

Assignats at an enormous discount ; but the sale of most commodities, and especially for the public, subject to the law of the maximum, which levels that discount ; a vigour, severity, sternness, and despotism, in the energies of government, which enforce

force an obedience to all decrees, such as have not perhaps been known before in the world.

These circumstances, when combined, form one of the most curious political spectacles of which the history of mankind presents any traces.

Several writers have of late attempted to prove that the whole is anarchy. That there is an infinite deal of anarchy scattered through the kingdom cannot be doubted, but there seems a strong tendency to a sort of government which once before appeared, and which was the most singular that ever existed; I mean that of Sparta.

By the institutions of Lycurgus, the property of all the land of the state was given to the public, at the disposition of the legislature, and divided into equal lots according to the number of citizens. Commerce, industry, and the precious metals, were proscribed; the consequence, without any direct declarations or laws, was entire equality. The people were divided into two classes, soldiers free and cultivators slaves: the lands were cultivated by the latter (helotes), who, having first fed themselves, the whole surplus became the property of the public; money was unnecessary; the iron coin flaked in vinegar, to deprive it of intrinsic value, answered merely as a measure of barter.

In comparing this system with the state of France, it would be absurd to suppose what the intention has been, or the professed objects of legislation in that kingdom. It is only necessary to examine how things really are, and what the tendency in future.

Under a legislation of nominal liberty, we are not to look for the cultivators of France being *formally* enslaved; but, speaking politically, they are almost as much so as the helotes of Sparta. They are fixed to a spot which they cannot abandon without securing the cultivation, their skill and attention even are placed in requisition, they are *bound* to cultivate whether they will or not; nay, they are bound to take care of the land of a neighbour if absent on the public service, and they are tied to these exertions under severe penalties, at the moment that half their teams are in requisition for military duties. Of their crop, no part is free but that which is necessary for their own consumption; the rest is all in requisition by a formal decree of the Convention, and every bushel and head of cattle and sheep registered under severe penalties. The *use of the public* is the use of the soldiery: thus there are but two classes as at Sparta; the enslaved cultivators who feed, and the free military who are fed. Even in the equal division of the soil the resemblance becomes every day more complete; for,

for, the Convention has long ago received the proposition, and referred it to a committee; but I want no authority of that kind, for the natural tendency of things in such a position is more powerful than an express law: any considerable inequality in the property of land cannot possibly last in France under its present system.

Necessity in another point has shewn how superior it is to laws; money is becoming hourly as much proscribed in France as in Laconia. The coinage of assignats has had and will have the effect of the iron coin of Lycurgus. While the precious metals could be applied to the public service, the Convention made great use of them, for they seized all; but an uncontrollable necessity lessens the mass rapidly, and they will infallibly disappear. Under so violent a state of internal hostility, this does not threaten so much ruin as may have been conceived,

If the government is *consequent* and just to those principles which are silently establishing themselves, it will, when no more considerable use is to be made of gold and silver, prohibit it them altogether; and all their imports from abroad will be paid for in barter.

This reach of policy is, however, less to be expected than any other part of the system; the

plunder of the English commerce, which is sure to go forward in every war, and more than ever in this, from the utter annihilation of their own, united with that of such provinces as their arms may conquer, will be strong temptations to the contrary, as well as the private interest of those who, for the moment, are the leaders of the Convention.

Whatever may be the intention or the object of the leaders in the revolutions which have for five years distracted that kingdom, the fact is, that a system somewhat similar to that of Lycurgus has nearly established itself. The existence of very great cities will occasion shades of difference; the inhabitants of those cities will become the garrisons of walled camps; and thus assimilate with the military, and become a part of the free class; but the peasantry may remain equally enslaved.

Sir James Stewart's *Political Economy* carries many proofs of profound thinking: there is a passage in it on the Spartan system, which must be deemed at present very curious: "Were any prince in Europe, whose subjects I shall suppose may amount to six millions of inhabitants, one-half employed in agriculture, the other half employed in trade and industry, or living upon a revenue already acquired; were such a prince, I say, supposed to have authority sufficient to engage his people to
adopt

adopt a new plan of economy, calculated to secure them against the designs of a powerful neighbour, who, I shall suppose, has formed schemes of invading and subduing them; let him engage the whole proprietors of land to renounce their several possessions; or, if that supposition should appear too absurd, let him contract debts to the value of the whole property of the nation; let the land-tax be imposed at 20s. in the pound, and then let him become bankrupt to the creditors: let the income of all the lands be collected throughout the country for the use of the state; let all the luxurious arts be proscribed, and let those employed in them be formed, under the command of the former land-proprietors, into a body of regular troops, officers, and soldiers, provided with every thing necessary for their maintenance, and that of their wives and families, at the public expence. Let me carry the supposition farther: let every superfluity be cut off; let the peasants be enslaved, and obliged to labour the ground with no view of profit to themselves, but for simple subsistence; let the use of gold and silver be proscribed, and let all these metals be shut up in a public treasure: let no foreign trade, and very little domestic, be encouraged; but let every man willing to serve as a soldier be received and taken care of; and those, who either incline to be idle or who are found superfluous, be sent out of the country. I ask, What combination, among the modern European princes, would carry

on a successful war against such a people? What article would be wanting to their ease, that is, to their ample subsistence? Their happiness would depend upon the temper of their mind. And what country could defend themselves against the attack of such an enemy? * Such a system of political economy, I readily grant, is not likely to take place; but, if ever it did, would it not effectually dash to pieces the whole fabric of trade and industry which has been forming for so many years? And would it not oblige every other nation to adopt, as far as

* In Harrington's *Oceana* there is a remarkable passage prophetic of the future power of France, should she possess a popular government: the idea is, however, built on very wild notions.

“ Columbus offered gold to one of your kings, through whose happy incredulity another prince has drunk the poison, even to the consumption of his people; but I do not offer you a nerve of war that is made of purse-strings, such an one as has drawn the face of the earth into convulsions, but such as is natural to her health and beauty. If France, Italy, and Spain, were not all sick, all corrupted together, there would be none of them so; for, the sick would not be able to withstand the sound, nor the sound to preserve their health without curing of the sick. The first of these nations (which, if you stay her leisure, will, in my mind, be France) that recovers the health of antient prudence shall certainly govern the world. For, what did Italy when she had it? And, as you were in that, so shall you in like case be reduced to a province: I do not speak at random. Italy, in the consulship of Lucius Emilius Papus and Caius Atilius Regulus, armed upon the Gallic tumult that then happened of herself, and without the aid of foreign auxiliaries, 70,000 horse and 700,000 foot: but as Italy is the least of those three countries, so is France now the most populous.” *Oceana Works*, p. 203.

possible,

possible, a similar conduct, from a principle of self-preservation?"

That system of economy, which this writer thought not likely to take place, seems at present fast establishing itself, not formally and intentionally from the operations of a legislature, but by a sort of natural tendency of some of the most extraordinary and despotic measures ever heard of; not less so than the revolution effected by Lycurgus; and whether it really end in an establishment so exactly similar is not essential—it is sufficient for our purpose at present to state, that, in effect, the cultivators are enslaved; money disappearing, foreign commerce annihilated, and domestic scarcely existing, the towns become camps: with all this violence of change, the force of the kingdom greater than in any former period, and Europe trembling around. These are facts undeniable because notorious, and they come nearly to the Lacedemonian system; the slavery of the peasantry may ere long be civil as well as political.

The Jacobin spirit in France has effected, by spilling torrents of blood, almost every circumstance supposed to be done by the ideal prince of Sir James Stewart; there is hardly a point that varies, except the command of the troops not being given to the land-proprietors. The governing powers got possession of the lands of the kingdom by a shorter process

process than *persuading* landlords : — They cut the throats of those they could lay their hands on, and confiscated the property of all ; the similarity in every other particular is remarkable ; *product of lands collected for the state ; the luxurious arts proscribed ; a great army of the idle formed and fed at the public expence ; every superfluity cut off ; the peasants obliged to labour the ground for simple subsistence ; gold and silver the same as proscribed in circulation, but shut up in a public treasure ; no foreign trade and very little domestic ;* every man willing to be a soldier received ;* the resemblance is complete : sorry I am to add, that the enormous power, the result of the whole, continues the similarity, which is finished by the *combination of the modern European*

* La Convention, après avoir raisonnée d'après ces principes, les a tellement insinués à la nation, qu'elle peut détruire ses ports, brûler ses vaisseaux et ses navires ; et, se faisant ainsi *un rampart de sa barbarie*, porter un coup mortel au commerce de toutes les nations en anéantissant le sien. *Le Comte de Montgaillard*, p. 49. That the Convention never understood the real tendency of their own measures appears from their exertions by sea, which are a direct deduction from the real power, the natural result of the system forming itself, and must arrest in some measure its progress. The spectacle of a people, abandoning all that the world most esteems, and resting every hope and effort on agriculture and arms, whether the result of the deep views of such a legislator as Lycurgus, or the atrocities of a Convention, ends in the same effect, the establishment of such a force as ought to be well understood by their neighbours, who may, for want of understanding it, find themselves swept away or crushed by its weight.

princes

princes being hitherto insufficient for the purposes for which it was framed.

In the establishing such a system, we see the cultivators of the land, that is, half the people, enslaved. This has taken place. Sir James's conclusion is that the result would be *effectually dashing to pieces the whole fabric of trade and industry*, meaning plainly that of all Europe, which has taken three centuries to form. If his principles are solid, and no extraordinary steps taken to prevent it, this conclusion seems not extravagant.

Here then are two great results of this new system which the French have established; the landlords murdered, the cultivators of every kind made beasts of burthen to the towns and armies, and trade and industry dashed to pieces! and this not the peculiar effect of certain atrocious proceedings in France, but the natural tendency of the system, forming itself, by an invisible chain of necessity, beyond the political eye that moved in the whirlwind, and beyond the power or control of the legislators that have ignorantly established it. — The IRON AGE of barbarism returned — and all that trade and industry, wealth and peace, arts and science, civilization and elegance — all that the culture and decoration of the human mind have done for man — levelled in the dust; — and, in their place, blood, and rapine, and horror, triumphant!

What

What this writer adds of happiness alludes, certainly, to the soldiery alone ; for, an enslaved peasantry, and industry dashed to pieces, are not features of happy fields, or manufactures in a state of ease.

Here let us pause for a moment, and ask our landed, and trading, and moneyed, men, of every description, who, on one hand, are favourable to the principles that are producing these revolutions in the world ; or, on the other, inactive in opposition to them ; what are, or can be, their end, their aim, or expectation ?

Annihilation is the palpable fate of the whole body of landlords. Whatever may be the meanderings of the anarchy that leads to such situation, or the sinuosities of that mass of horror and confusion that accompanies it, in any case, the event to land-proprietors must be the same. A few years of storm and bloodshed destroy them and their families, and the STATE, new-moulded from the dregs of towns, assumes their place.* The manœuvres of prehension, pre-emption, and requisition, chain down the farmers and labourers as they are now chained in France ; by the letter of the law with civil liberty to console them, but political slaves,

* La Convention a conçu le projet de *nationaliser* le sol entier de la France ; d'inscrire le territoire, comme la dette publique, sur le *grand livre*. *Montgaillard*, p. 46.

cultivating for others, and daring to retain but a bare subsistence, real slaves to those who would pretend that they were fighting to reform abuses and establish freedom! View the lands of England and the happiness of every class that cultivates, and then meditate on such a change!

The whole fabric of arts, and industry, and manufactures, which has taken such time and such wisdom to erect, dashed in pieces! Is that a spectacle to kindle apprehensions in the minds of those wealthy men, who, at Leeds, Sheffield, Halifax, Birmingham, Manchester, and Norwich, see, apparently with unconcern, societies springing up around them, whose professed purpose is to change the constitution of their own country, and disseminate the most lavish praises of the proceedings in France? Have they no feeling for the treatment which the *egotism* of mercantile wealth has met with at Lyons, Marseilles, Bourdeaux, Nantes, Havre, and in every commercial town of that kingdom? Our Dissenters, who are wealthy and commercial, and who complain of tests as their oppression here, and sigh, many of them, for the equality of a republican government—do they see no oppressions in the fraternity of Frenchmen? Let them turn their eyes to Flanders, and there they will see an equal measure dealt to friends and foes: and the little finger of the fraternity of republicans a deadlier weight than the whole mass of grievances they complained of

of under their former master. You want, in England, tests repealed and abuses reformed; and, to carry your point, encourage societies cemented in the jargon of the Convention, and who, by aiding the views of France, would bring in a torrent that would reform all abuses, for it would leave nothing to abuse; — it would reform your commerce — fraternize your wealth — and, if your heads escaped the requisition of the *Holy Mother* Guillotine, you would bless your stars for a cock-boat to convey you naked to America.

Our moneyed men also, whose riches are in banks, stocks, funds, and mortgages — do they wish to divide the national strength by questions of party and reform? Do they look to the French system of iron and paper as better securities than the laws of England? To name the contrast is enough: that understanding, in a state of manhood, must be infantine indeed that does not feel the shock, and see, in perspective, the universal ruin that would deluge the land.

Do our commercial men imagine that such an iron system can establish itself in France, and trade be left to flourish in any neighbouring kingdom? The expectation would be vain. The ambition of republics is proverbial, and none so domineering as the democratical. The existence of so enormous a force, with no limits to its power or its acquisitions
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but what the spirit of its own moderation might define, would be absolutely incompatible with the peace and security of a wealthy neighbour: commercial jealousy, the disputes inseparable from extended trade, the envy which great success and greater riches excite, a thousand circumstances, would kindle heats; and, where the iron arm of power measures with wealthy imbecility, what would it prove but the contest between the tiger and the lamb? A state of things so obvious and so dangerous, that peace consistently with policy would be but a preparation for hostility: in other words, wars would be endless till conquests reduced the weaker party to the destruction of unlimited submission; a progress that would justify the remark of Sir James Stewart, that one country, establishing itself on the simple basis of agriculture and arms, would destroy the commerce, trade, and industry, of all its neighbours. Resistance is vain, without a policy equally energetic; and whether you are driven to adopt such institutions for self-defence, or are conquered for want of them, commerce, in either case, is destroyed.

What a call then is so fatal a prospect, to every commercial class in Britain, to second the efforts of government with a vigour the most determined; since it is only by great sacrifices, at present, that any thing can be preserved in future.

But there are men among us in a state of poverty, thrown perhaps out of employment by bankruptcies or the war, who, being in distress, think that no change could to them be worse. Miserable infatuation! Let them also view the French operations in Flanders! What is the language used to the lowest of the people; even to such as were friends? Money they have none, for all was seized, but they have arms and legs — their bodies are in *requisition* — and the only salute of fraternity, MARCH OR BE HANGED!!! Ranged in the front lines to meet the cannon of the foe, with the guillotine in the rear, they feel that there are evils of a deadlier hue than Imperial corruptions, and that the iron sway of a Convention can bury in equal ruins both states and reformers.

In regard to men of another description, and in legislative posts, — a call to persons of their knowledge and information surely must be unnecessary. It cannot now be a question whether government is to be supported or opposed; it is the government of the period, and consequently that alone which can save us from a pressure we never before experienced — from difficulties unheard of — and from dangers, menacing to an astonished world. No opposition will, at such a moment, attempt to perplex the minister they cannot remove. — Amongst men in their situations, there surely can be

be but one heart and one hand, there can be no other principle but that of general union, the union of all that is respectable in the kingdom, to oppose that united mass of atrocity which threatens to overthrow every established government, and sweep from its very basis all that renders mankind superior to brutes.

What is the language that at such a moment would do honour to opposition? *Europe is in danger, and every thing in this kingdom is at stake; the exigencies of the period are greater and more critical than ever they were before. Such is not a moment to perplex your plans or your operations; we will oppose none of your measures; we do not love you; we do not approve of your being in power; but we love our country and feel its danger: you shall have every aid that parliament can give you. We will not secede from our posts, nor will we join you in office or emoluments, but remain, as we are, on the watch for the safety of the kingdom, ready to assist and to support you. Compare such a noble conduct with the wrangling perplexity of eternal debates that occupy and confound the attention, which ought to be given serenely to the business of the public. What universal estimation, what CHARACTER, would flow from patriotism so clearly announced!*

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The people of this country have been much too apt to imagine that the war would be terminated

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speedily,

speedily, and that such horrors could not have any duration. They should be undeceived in this idea; they should understand the nature of their danger, the remote and eventful, as well as the more immediate; they should be brought to look it in the face and understand it in all its possible combinations; and, above all, should be well informed how far the probabilities extend, that the republican system may establish itself premanently, if not opposed with the most determined vigour, and on principles as energetic as its own. And, in doing this, it is a wretched system to be alternately elated or depressed according to the changes of success that attend the armies in Flanders. Were that country recovered by the close of the campaign, there would, from such an event, result no security that it would not again be lost in another. Nor should it be forgotten that the French Convention, resting on their arms, *may say, we will make no peace with you but upon our own terms; let the war be perpetual, do your worst, we despise your power, we have nothing to lose that you can acquire, you are rich, we will take the chance of events.* In such a case there would be security without expence, on one side; on the other, a ruinous expenditure, which would be attended with incessant depredation and perpetual alarm. In such a war what could give security but a militia so numerous as to set descents at defiance?

The Count de Montgaillard seems decidedly of opinion, that peace is the object of the rulers of France, and that it is impossible for them to support the war two years longer. I will not contend with him upon points impossible to ascertain at present; but this must be clear to every neighbour of France; that, if a peace would enable them to consolidate and perfect any plan of a republic, that does or might tend to establish a system of the kind I have described, there is no war that would in the end be more fatal than such a peace. Such a republic is absolutely incompatible with the safety of the property of Europe. We know in England that, even in time of war, our numberless Jacobin societies have exerted every nerve, and persisted, with the most unremitting diligence and energy, to extend their principles far and wide, to multiply, connect, and combine, such societies, and to disseminate, with the most pernicious activity, an admiration of every thing performed in France. If they have done this in a moment of hostility, what would they not dare when supported by the countenance and treasures of a French Convention, acting by their ambassador at London, and seconded by myriads of agents spreading the poison of their principles in every village of the kingdom? In a country so free as this is, with a press open to every species of political licentiousness, would it be possible for the constitution to be preserved five

years in such a situation, supposing it probable that the French republic would preserve the peace for so long a period? The consequences of such a state of things are too clear to be doubted, and the danger too dreadful to be encountered. Should such a day come, if the government of this kingdom be not armed with powers sufficient to meet such an arrangement with effect, the result is easily foreseen.

If there are men who think that these remarks favour too much of a stronger system of government than suits the freedom of the times, let the indecent spectacle of the great law-officers of the crown, at a late trial hissed and hooted, and the counsel for a prisoner, against whom a grand jury had found a bill for high treason, drawn in triumph through the streets——let such a spectacle convince every reasonable man that there ought to be a firmness in government, at such a moment, sufficient to guard those properties that are in such evident danger; to guard all for which men of property can desire to preserve existence, while all is thus attacked by our Jacobin societies with mobs of their own, ready to second and support them, ready to outrage and impede the course of justice in the purest judicature the world ever saw!

To the real and peaceable friends of British liberty it is not of much consequence whether the conspirators against our happy government die on the scaffold or live under the odium of having attempted to destroy us; but it is of infinite importance that we should have received the conviction, which the trials that are passed have given us, that such designs were unquestionably formed, and that the pretence of a reform in parliament was no more than a cloak to cover intentions of the deepest malignity. It will ever be esteemed of consequence that the real system of our Jacobin societies should have been so clearly developed, that we should know the plans of national ruin and destruction that were so near their execution; that we should see how narrowly we have escaped Conventional horrors; and, if the overthrow of our Constitution was plotted in subservience to French politics, while we were engaged in a war with that people, we cannot surely be at any loss to foresee what would be the result of similar plots with a free intercourse open between the two kingdoms, and a Convention-ambassador, supported not only by the treasures of France, but acting under the incalculable impulse of knowing that peace had been imposed by their superiority in the field, and submitted to from feeling that resistance was vain. What could flow from such a situation but a close treaty of fraternity, friendship, and alliance, between our Jacobin re-

formers and their victorious supporters on the other side the channel?

It will perhaps be said, that the violence exercised on the landed interest in France is but temporary, and that peace would restore both liberty and property: what events the womb of time labours with, at such a fearful period, is not easy to conjecture; but difficulties of a thousand species are spread around. There are not, probably, fewer than two millions of men registered for arms in France, who, by only being enrolled, partake of the privilege of being fed, if not gratis, something like it, by the labour of an oppressed peasantry. Immense and victorious armies are in the number. To suppose that these men, possessing, in the last resort, the whole power of the kingdom in their hands, would voluntarily renounce such a situation for no other purpose but to be starved, through an attention to moral good, is an extravagant idea. Those, whose situations were formed by THE STATE, must, with arms in their hands, be fed and supported by THE STATE, whether they are fighting in Flanders or recalled to quarters at home; and to do this there is but one method, *consistent with the preservation of power*, in the hands of those who possess it, which is, to continue the policy that armed those hordes. So long as the crops of the farmers are in requisition, at an arbitrary price paid with paper, they are, to all political purposes, slaves;

slaves; and the state is possessed, though under a milder aspect, of the power which Lycurgus decreed at Sparta by means of the helotes. If it is replied that this is consistent only with war, and not for peace, the truth of the objection depends on events; suppose those armed millions to be quartered in walled camps, called towns, still they must be fed; and, with all the power of the nation in their hands, who is to change the policy that feeds them at the expence of the peasant? But, farther, if peace is to endanger the system, if the return of such myriads of soldiers is dreaded by the leaders at home, how is peace to be attained? While war is for the interest of every man in arms and every man in power, will they readily have recourse to peace, will they not more probably determine that there never shall be any such thing? There are not wanting decrees of the Convention that have a strong tincture of such a policy: and every one knows that Laconia was but a great camp, with no employment but arms for every free man in it.

By others it may, perhaps, be thought, that, as the soldiery were drawn from the occupations of industry, they might on a peace return to those employments; but this movement is not on velvet. The manufactures of France, working for foreign commerce or luxurious consumption, are not in a state of impediment or stagnation, they are abso-

lutely annihilated; and the only fabrics in the kingdom are of the most ordinary and gross nature, but chiefly of arms and ammunition for the account of government. With money gradually proscribed or driven away, a deluge of paper in its place, and equality established, how are manufactures to be revived? It is a visionary idea. Impracticable; impossible! But, suppose it possible in a long period of time, what is to become of these millions of armed men in the years that would be necessary for the transition from a state of so much violence to the peace and tranquillity necessary for such re-establishment? Who does not see an universal anarchy spreading through the land? But reverse the medal to the situation of things at present; millions armed and fighting, and fed by millions politically enslaved, and it is difficult to say how long so enormous a power may be supported.

There was a very singular policy at Sparta, not a part of the institutions of Lycurgus, but springing by necessity from them, and this was the destruction of the helotes when they became too numerous, and the sending off colonies of free citizens when the multiplication of that class arose beyond the necessary balance. The progress of events in France will, by some means or other, preserve something of a balance between the two classes; the destruction by war may reduce the soldiery to such a number as can be fed by the peasants:

peasants : their great danger, and a palpable one it is, is that the farmer will be so discouraged by this violent policy, that cultivation will fall short in producing the necessary surplus by which the armies and towns are to be fed ; against that obvious danger, tyranny has nothing to provide but terror and punishment ; their armies march and their ships sail under the influence of the guillotine ; the plough must move by the same omnipotent instigation. Here, however, ought to be their great apprehension, and the evil is of a nature that even despotism like theirs, more terrible than any that ever yet desolated the globe, will find more difficult to prevent or to cure than any other.

Lycurgus was sensible how dangerous to his institutions must all foreign connection prove, and he guarded against it with the utmost caution. It was foreign conquest that destroyed Sparta. A war vibrating in its events would be the most favourable to the establishment of a similar system in France ; rapid conquests, that give them the plunder and possession of rich countries, such as they are surrounded by, might be as fatal to their system as it would be ruinous to the miserable people mastered by their arms.

But the circumstance most interesting, and which demands beyond any other the attention of every government in Europe, is the enormity, resources,
 extent,

extent, and energy, of the force which has thus been created by events the most amazing and the most horrible that ever astonished and scourged the human species. This is a subject that well deserves the most serious examination by every cabinet, and ought to alarm every individual that has property in any country of the globe. That this force has been greatly under-rated becomes every hour more apparent; and, with its manifestation, ought to increase the terror of all its neighbours. If, as I think may be contended, it should be found to rest in the great outline on something similar in effect to the institutions of Lycurgus, and that we have really cause to apprehend the reality of Sir James Stewart's prophetic idea, the cause of this alarm becomes more serious, because it would then rest on a more permanent principle than is admitted at present.

I am not unacquainted with the memoirs and information of the times, which give to one person,* distinguished more for crimes than *supposed* ability, something, perhaps much of that influence, which, in a period not quite similar in this country, advanced an individual to the supreme authority. Whether that person is or is not in possession of the authority attributed to him; whether the Committee of Public Safety, the Convention, or the

* This paper was written before the death of Robespierre.

Jacobin club, be the real despots of France, I shall not inquire at present; at all events, the temporary power of a leader, in a moment like the present, in France, must necessarily hang by a thread, and every reasoning, founded on so uncertain a combination, must want much of that maturity which ought alone to demand attention in an inquiry like the present.

The different principles, apparent in the two conquests of Flanders, made by the French under Dumourier and Pichegru, are, however, remarkable, and seem to prove a real change in the government of France; while the Convention had any freedom left, the people in every foreign conquest were summoned and appealed to, and every effort tended to establish a government similar to that of France. At present the French treat the Flemings as a mere conquered people, seizing every kind of property, and making levies of men to serve in their armies; the first was the policy of a free republic; the present should speak the real dictatorship of Robespierre, more anxious to secure France than to render their system universal. By treating Flanders with this severity, they plainly give up the idea of being joined in other countries by *the people*, in expectation of being rendered free; such extension of liberty, as it is called, suited perfectly the republican spirit of a free Convention, but it would in nothing second the views of a despot in France,

France, anxious only to secure the power he had gained.

Thus may the welfare of Europe much depend on the personal interests of such a chief as Robespierre, who cannot establish his own power without destroying in a great measure the establishment of such a system as the Convention, if it supports itself free, may probably effect; a despotic usurper in France may find his interest in a peace, and the governments of his neighbours have no reason to be alarmed at a power which will not necessarily be adverse to the principles of their own.

Lately there has arisen in the Convention a strong appearance of a more mild spirit and a marked opposition to the Jacobins: how long this new and unlooked-for disposition will prevail is a question entirely doubtful. The atrocities of Jacobinism united all Europe against France; the return of humanity is much more likely to dissolve the league than the former system of blood and horrors. But these variations of clouds and sun-shine, which may pass by turns across the French hemisphere, are nothing in the eye of the politician, who must be sensible that such changes can never be relied on by the neighbours of that kingdom as the least assurance of their own safety. It would be a miserable supineness to trust to the arrangements of factions in a Convention, or the vibrations of influence between

between such an assembly and the Jacobin clubs as any basis on which to found the hope of peace. Whatever party predominates, the power may remain that threatens the independancy of their neighbours; who are to look for security no more to a party of *indulgents* than to one of Jacobins. While a Republic, founded on equality and the destruction of property, remains in France, Europe is menaced with ruin, and must destroy the monster or be destroyed by it.

These parties may rise and fall in succession in that horrid system which has ruined France; but the probability is that the most violent will at last prevail in all Democracies; so that no reasonable man would be surprised to see the men who at present oppose the Jacobins carried by them to the guillotine. Suppose a peace concluded with the moderates, our fleets laid up, and our armies disbanded; a new revolution of party takes place at Paris; the friends of peace destroyed, and Jacobin fury predominant. What danger, what confusion, what useless expence, what disasters, in the prospect of a new war! What is the conclusion? That the multiplication of assignats must be continued by war, till the people, thoroughly tired of their tyrants, shall establish, on firm foundations, the power of those who from moderation may be relied on to keep whatever peace may then be concluded.

Nor

Nor am I unmindful that it was MANNERS that formed the Spartans, and assuredly not the manners of Frenchmen; but events, like those which have taken place in France, will tend strongly to an entire change of manners; and that in effect they are changed is known; the equality which is introduced, and the banishment, death, or ruin, of all who had fortunes large enough to preserve the luxury which forms European manners, have established a simplicity, a ferocity, and a hardy courage, that may have effects, if not entirely similar to the institutions of Lycurgus, sufficiently so to render France a camp, and its foldiers the terror of the world.

This enormous power results from the principle common to the state of Sparta and France, that a people may arrange themselves into two classes only; foldiers and cultivators: when every man that can be spared from tillage and the grosser fabrics is made a foldier, and fed at the expence of the state; the Lacedemonian system, so far as national power is in question, becomes established; and if the government of such a country can arrange itself in a manner to escape a civil war, the consequences of Lycurgus's institutions may be expected.

The important position at present to be considered is this: Whatever may be the principles on
which

which this enormous power of France is founded, that power is absolutely inconsistent with the safety of her neighbours; and whether it be the establishment of Jacobin anarchy or Spartan energy, it is equally incompatible with the existence of property in any country of Europe. What then is the policy that shall, in either case, be adopted to counteract this dreadful torrent, which threatens to bear down and drive before it every thing that can in a polished society make life desirable?

The first feature of this inquiry is the novelty of the danger, which results from the incredible resources created in France upon principles that set all experience and all ancient policy at defiance. Should it end in the proscription of the precious metals, which I am inclined to think, the * measure most to be dreaded by her neighbours, that country will rest, in every respect, on so new and singular a foundation, that it will merit the utmost anxiety to discover the best means of opposing what may not be found so irresistible as Sir James Stewart was inclined to believe.

* I do not at present conceive that the full force of France on her present system is by any other means to be rendered effective; and it seems to be the only measure that can prevent her running into absolute confusion; great inequality and great discontents can be prevented no other way, nor would an agrarian law have effect without it.

The resource of that writer, the adopting a similar situation, would be voluntarily to accept the ruin and destruction which events the most atrocious have brought upon life and property in France.

Clear, however, it must be to the narrowest mind, that the maxims of old policy will fall short when measured against the exigencies of so new a situation. Let us consider the case of Britain. The continued increase of a *moneyed* debt when opposed to the iron of Sparta, or the paper of France, *founded on Spartan principles*, would probably be found a reliance inefficacious. As far as the expence of a navy extends, there may not be any other resource, but for security at home by land, in case of unforeseen events, a force such as never yet has been seen in this island must be speedily prepared, or at least registered and armed, or we shall be at the mercy of events which *may* prove untoward.

The despotism that governs France avails itself of the whole force of the nation. Whatever will not act with government is crushed, destroyed, annihilated, till terror brings all in effect to one uniform mass, that rolls with the resistless weight of a torrent of lava. To think of opposing to such a wedge-like force the half-measures that have been consistent with a state of licentious freedom is to hold a feather to a whirlwind.

To allow at such a moment the printing and dispersing treason, Jacobinism, calls to sedition, and panegyrics on anarchy, is to play the game of our enemies, and to admit poison to be administered to the national mind. It is beating up for recruits for the Convention; and arming those whose purpose is to destroy us.

To allow societies, under any of those offensive and dangerous titles we have heard of, to assemble under false pretences and insidious views, who adopt the forms and the jargon of Jacobinism in France, who call for the guillotine as the best means of reforming British abuses; to suffer such conspiracies against domestic peace, to form, complete, and mature themselves; is this consistent with the existence of the lives or the security of the property of the people at such a fearful moment as the present? Activity, vigour, and energy, such as the world has not seen, are exerted to spread destruction; will the placid means of former tranquil times measure with such a foe?

Let these men who are copying, with such religious veneration, the forms, the expressions, the principles, that have desolated France, and seen her lose by the field, the dungeon, and the scaffold, THIRTEEN HUNDRED THOUSAND men, tell us what would be the fate of societies established amidst the

liberty of that kingdom to reform abuses or alter the constitution? They would count in the six hundred and fifty thousand wretches in prisons, filled faster than they are emptied, though three hundred heads per diem fall by the guillotine! — efforts of that purity of freedom so much extolled; of *that flood of light and truth which sweeps from the earth despotism in all its forms.**

While myriads are in the field for the destruction of all property, property must be armed or it cannot be safe. Upon a former occasion I recommended a horse-militia of property; the noble spirit of a part of the nation has executed the idea; but this is a point that must not be left to private feelings. While the attack is made by such forces as never were in the field before, the means of defence must be proportionate to the danger; a force should be established that sets all apprehension beside the question.

The difficulties are great, but they may not be found insuperable. With manufactures and commerce supported, the same proportion of the people could not be drawn into the field as the Spartan system of France furnishes; for, in her case, nearly all the hands of the nation, not actually employed in raising food, may be converted into sol-

* Society for Constitutional Information.

diers ; and this is the circumstance that creates so enormous a power. But, what we cannot equal for foreign attack, we may approach for home defence, were every man of a given property, between the ages of fifteen and sixty, regimented, armed,* and liable to be called out ; the property of the individual to decide whether he should serve in the cavalry or infantry ; and no exemptions whatever to be allowed to rank or profession.

There are probably twelve millions of souls in Great Britain, consequently three millions of men capable of bearing arms ; were five hundred thousand of these formed into a militia, regimented and armed, a force would be established equal to any demand that the probability of events would render necessary. The whole expence of the measure should rest on the individuals, the execution of the policy that would give security to property should in all reason be supported by property.

That such a measure should not be left to the voluntary efforts of individuals we see sufficient

* Upon such a plan it would probably be better to go no farther in the execution than the enrolment, arming, and appointment of officers. Experience has shewn how very speedily men may be converted into soldiers ; and, when the number is so great, it would not be politic to harass them by any unnecessary service.

proof in the present efforts to raise an armed yeomanry, so respectably and efficiently made in some districts, but so languid and irregular in others, that, while some counties have made good beginnings, others, after several months, but imperfectly move. Little separate corps belonging to towns and small districts would be useful to suppress tumults; but, in case of any larger insurrection, or foreign invasion, there ought in every county to be one or two common centres, where all may speedily unite, and regulations, enacted long before the moment of distress, should, by providing for every difficulty, prevent all confusion.

How far it would be wise to unite this measure with a plan of fortifying to an impregnable strength the posts most advantageous from nature and situation would deserve consideration; and whether a capacious citadel near the capital should not be formed for its protection would be a similar question.

The infinite importance of fortresses in the defence of a country was never more exemplified than in the present war. France and Piedmont have been secured by them, and Flanders twice overrun for want of them. The Emperor Joseph's dismantling the fortifications of the Flemish towns may prove an æra in the history of Europe.

The foreign commerce of the kingdom would depend much on the events that passed on the continent; to imagine that we should be able long to preserve ourselves, were other nations ruined and enslaved by the French system, would be a vain idea. Nothing probably can save the world but such a concert of every power in Europe as has not yet taken place. The ideas of attack seem not altogether to have been formed with the wisdom necessary to match the mischievous energy of the French republic.

It should seem from events that France is invulnerable in any central point of her fortified frontier: great exertions may make an impression, but exertions great enough to follow the blow on that side are not to be expected. Had the allies rested absolutely on the defensive from Switzerland to Lille, and made no attack but on the line of the coast, with a view to penetrate by the Seine to Paris, impressions, equal to those of Valenciennes, Quesnoy, Landrecy, and Condé, would have had an effect far different from what has attended the taking of those towns. Had Dunkirk, Graveline, and Calais, been conquered, and peopled entirely with emigrants collected from all Europe, such a measure would have made an opening into France through a country open enough for the operations of ca-

valry, and in the vicinity of a discontented province, more effective than double the success in any other quarter. Succours and supplies of every kind would be at command by sea; and, when Russia moves, as move she must in time, Russian auxiliaries might be landed at once in the heart of France. If the Convention in the mean time attacked Germany, or the eastern line of Flanders, the country should have been made a desert* for them to march through, and they would have found their strength weaken every step they advanced.

Such a plan, executed with views of the aggrandizement of Britain, or upon any principles but those of the common cause, might have failed; but impolicy so obvious was scarcely to be apprehended.

It has been asserted that the Duke of Marlborough's plan, had Queen Anne's war continued, was to march to Paris by the Seine; he, doubtless, saw the advantages which the coast and that river would give to the attack. But, in the present case, the reasons are more powerful. Normandy is one of the most discontented provinces under the iron

* Certainly at the expence of the common cause, and not at that of the unfortunately situated people. In all alliances there ought to be a ratio fixed, by which to pay expences common to the cause.

sceptre of the Convention; and, were there a force established capable of looking the enemy in the face, the people would not probably be tame spectators.

For a private individual in his closet to hazard speculations on the conduct of the war may seem rash and assuming, but the events of this fearful period are all *new*; the principles on which every thing moves are new; they are novelties to the most experienced statesmen; and if none but old plans are pursued on one side, while the other is actuated by unheard-of principles and exertions, the event may be easily conjectured.

To concentrate the attack, where it can be concentrated with most effect, and to oppose a desert in other quarters, seems an effort that would partake of the vigour which animates the enemy.

But no force or principle of attack can be rationally expected to have effect, if the people in France, disaffected to the Convention, are not induced to give their aid to those who come to their assistance. In this respect, the policy of the allies has not been free from error. The Imperial arms fixed to the gates of the conquered towns; Dunkirk summoned to surrender to the King of Great Britain, and Toulon *acquired* under the recognition of the constitution of 1789, marked such a

heterogeneous plan, as could give no solid hope or fixed reliance to the royalists, or to the other disaffected classes in France. Some change of policy seems necessary in this respect; the people of that wretched kingdom should not only have the experience of Convention horrors, but they should see in clear perspective a bright contrast. A manifesto of future liberty, consistent with royalty, should be held out to them as the only object of the allies. Let a government be established in that kingdom, consistent with the existence of the governments of their neighbours, and with the security of property in Europe, and every aim of the war is accomplished. To specify with any degree of precision what this government should be, might indeed be insuperably difficult: this must be left to some future States General of the kingdom, formed of men of property alone, and elected by persons of some property, who, jointly with the king, must be the masters of that arrangement. As such a period could not arrive without the friends of property and order being triumphant over Jacobinism, there would be no apprehension that such an assembly would limit too much the royal power, to which they must assuredly look for the support which the new government would for some time stand in need of. The common feeling of past evils would secure the kingdom from any such misfortune. If the people of France were well impressed that this only was the object of the allies, and that success,

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in a great effort to throw off their present bloody yoke, would terminate in such an establishment, sanctioned by those friends, they would certainly feel inducements to make a great effort which at present they probably do not feel.

The oppression under which the landed interest, in all its branches, groans in France, would carry a yet more horrible aspect were they sensible of the natural tendency of the measures to which they now submit; if they knew that there was a real danger of their becoming the helotes of the soldiery; if they were sensible of that irresistible force, as much irresistible by themselves, if they suffer it to mature into system, as by an enemy abroad; they would assuredly view it with greater terror and alarm. Means ought to be taken, if such means are possible, to open their eyes to the enormity of their danger.

It has been, and is still, the opinion of many, that the natural course of the horrors which have desolated the kingdom will re-establish monarchy; but this probably must be the result of general discontent among those who have power in their hands, that is to say, the military. The discontents of the oppressed have all hitherto been crushed; of the discontents of the oppressors we are not yet informed. It is very difficult to imagine how a Convention-monarch can establish his power: a victo-
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rious and beloved general may effect it; but so aware have the legislature shewn themselves of this danger, that they seem determined to employ no commander long enough to fear him. Put an end to so ruinous a war, say other men, and leave the French to themselves, they will then quarrel and cut one another's throats in a civil war: if this be true, the Convention must know it, at least as well as these gentlemen, and if so where can the hope of peace be founded? Will they make peace to indulge a policy that is to destroy themselves? Victorious in so many quarters, will they abandon the career of conquest on any terms but their own? Such ideas fly over a thousand difficulties; and a peace dictated by such an enemy would either produce future and more fatal wars, when we should be the least prepared, or establish Jacobin horrors in every country of Europe.

That general concert and common feeling which ought to cement in the strictest bands an alliance of different powers, which has been so often looked for and so rarely attained, can alone render the war successful; if the present call for new measures and new principles be not sufficient to ensure it, the hope is for ever delusive. If our allies are not sensible of their danger; if there is only a common languid exertion at a moment which demands an unexampled vigour, it is beyond the power of Britain to supply the deficiency. Such a situation de-

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mands double attention to the means of providing for the defence of this island, as the war may, unavoidably, be spun into such a length as shall convince those powers of the greatness of their danger. The revolution that has taken place at Geneva, the war in Poland, and the conspiracies in almost every part of Europe, all created and fomented by French gold and French agents, may gradually bring the cabinets of these countries to feel that the period is really NEW, and must be met with new principles and new vigour.

Their languid efforts certainly arise, in great measure, from the extreme difficulty of raising money; no old policy can remedy this radical evil, but it well demands the attention of deep politicians to devise some means whereby to combat the efforts of the Convention, not hitherto adopted. Whether this can be done by arming every man of property, or by some new device of a continental paper-currency created for the occasion, must be left to the consideration of men able to fathom so difficult a subject.

At the same time that the power of France upon her frontiers is so unquestionably great, and the efforts of the allies insufficient to answer the vernal hopes of the campaign, there is a considerable degree of political comfort to be derived from the general discontent that must in the nature of things pervade,

pervade, from so many causes, so large a portion of the kingdom. The tyranny of the government, that has spread itself in all the horrors of general requisition; the destruction that has been poured on all industry that is not military; the ruin of the landed interest; the atrocity of perpetual executions; the immense herds of wretches languishing in prison; and the universal attack on property by the incessant issue of paper money; form in the whole such a system of national misery, that a few fortunate events, well-timed to meet the general feeling, might have a sudden and powerful effect in overturning a system founded in so bloody a despotism. Without doubt the eye of the combined cabinets is not inattentive to watch such events; and, when they happen, proper assistance will be given to promote a result so devoutly to be wished.

The information I have received from persons who have been lately in France, all agree in the great mass of the people hating the Convention. The scale of their hatred has been described thus: first, they abhor the Emigrants, to whom they attribute the war; secondly, they detest the allied powers, for wanting to impose (as they have been made to believe) their old government, with all its abuses; and, thirdly, they execrate the Convention. This hatred of the Convention is represented as pervading every class of the nation, the armies, the men, the officers, and even the generals; which, considering

considering the number that have died on the scaffold, and the part played by commissioners, has nothing marvelous. It is farther asserted, that the wish for the restoration of a limited monarchy is so general, that were the votes of all Frenchmen fairly taken, the King would unquestionably be restored: that suspicion, fear, and terror, govern the whole: that every class of men wish ardently for a peace, but dare not publicly express their minds. With all this, it is, however, admitted, that the probabilities of the restoration of the Jacobins to power is great, which obscures the whole detail, and leaves the events of futurity under the darkest cloud.

The internal state of this kingdom is in every respect, but its Jacobin leven, promising in a great degree. Considering that it is the period of a general war, that opened with unheard of bankruptcies, arising from other causes, our commerce must be allowed to flourish in a manner that few could have expected; war is indeed one of the greatest of national evils, and cannot be experienced without many attendant misfortunes: a trade extensive as that of Britain, must be liable, as it has been in every former period of hostility, to depredation and losses; but the almost utter annihilation of the most successful rivals we ever had tends strongly to remedy the deficiencies occasioned by that impeded consumption, which times of public distress on the continent must occasion. The conquest of the French

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sugar-islands may, on the common principles of British commercial policy, be esteemed the most important that ever this nation atchieved; and will, while they are in our possession, pay in public revenue a sum great enough even to measure in no slight degree with the mass of our expence. Had Martinique and Guadaloupe been retained by the peace of 1763, how many were the political pens that were then ready to declare that such an acquisition would have made the treaty of Paris a glorious epoch? Yet both those islands are not the third of St. Domingo! Our manufactures suffer by the war; some of them severely; they are, however, recovering the shock they experienced, and the most considerable in the kingdom to a degree that ought to banish despondency.* Our agriculture has not known even the most temporary check; products have been abundant and the price encouraging; a contrast complete, in all its parts, to the ruin and devastation with which licentious liberty has desolated France. Let the guardian-angel of our happy constitution preserve us from the dæmon of reform, and the prosperity, which is at present the envy of Europe, will prove as durable as it is brilliant.

* I am not acquainted with any, except the Norwich and Essex fabrics, that do not come within this idea. The former has been much affected by Russian and Prussian regulations.

The public prints have of late dwelt much on propositions for peace, said to be made by various powers to the Convention. Such rumours must appear incredible to those who reflect attentively on the events of the late campaign, and the magnitude of the danger which would result to all Europe from the consolidation of the French republic. Inferior states, whose situation is in the very jaws of the common enemy, may be supposed, through terror, to act in defiance of all political reason; but such insanity can scarcely be looked for in any other quarter. If the alliance, from errors committed in the plan of the campaign, are unable to resist the French force, while impelled by paper-money at an enormous discount, how will they be able to think of resistance at any future period, after the system of the French government has had time to knit, to settle, and to become firmly jointed and immovably rooted? Their paper, either established by poverty in the metals, or sunk by the wealth which the aggrandizement of their empire may command; in either case, what hope of future resistance? Is it admitted as a political datum, that the French republic is irresistible? And that her neighbours must throw down the arms they have been unable to wield? Is it to be understood by Europe that the will of the Convention is to be the law that governs the world? An elector on the Rhine may build his hope on his submission, but are the greater powers prepared

prepared by the disasters of a campaign to seek their temporary safety in the humiliation of such a conduct? If the universal monarchy of France was dreaded under Louis XIV. how much greater reason operates at present to apprehend that of a Spartan republic, that avails itself of the whole force of twenty-five millions of people, acting with unheard-of energy? If Europe combined is exhausted by three campaigns, what well-grounded hope can remain that any single power in future shall be able successfully to repel an attack or support a national independency? What can a peace produce, at such a moment, but imperious superiority on one side, and disgraceful submission on the other? Is it possible that the King and Parliament—that the people of this island are ready to meet so new and unheard-of a situation? Are they prepared to see a French ambassador acting the part, in England, of a Russian ambassador in Poland? Is the sovereign of this country to wait at the opera till Citizen Chauvelin appears? * Is all national dignity fled? Is the noble pride of an independent nation on the verge of being so committed? Would a peace, at such a moment, be the termination of disgrace, or the commencement of dependence? With an enemy so superior in the field, PEACE IS SUBMISSION.

* The opera at Warsaw did not commence, the King present, till the Russian minister came.

Whatever country has reason to despond, certainly this kingdom has the least. Disastrous as the campaign has been by land, it has been far from deficient in glory by sea; the conquest, though partial, of the French islands, the recovery of Corsica, the naval victory of the 1st of June, are all actions that shew too clearly to be misunderstood our naval superiority; a superiority which, while it is supported, will preserve us as free from the influence of French predominance as distance itself can preserve America or Russia. Fortunately, perhaps, for Europe, the Convention has busied itself with naval preparations, and attempted alike to triumph by land and on the ocean: the true system of their greatness has thus been impeded and perplexed, and those expences that bear the heaviest on their treasure enormously increased. We have the best-founded hope of continuing to triumph by sea, and consequently the firmest encouragement to prosecute the war with new vigour.

On what rests the best-founded hope of future success in the present war? In the opinion of most men that I have conversed with, it rests on the supposition, that the French people, oppressed in a thousand ways by the burthens imposed on them, will, in the long run, revolt against their oppressors, and absolutely refuse the circulation of that paper which is every day reducing them yet nearer to
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beggary. Should such a day come, what can accelerate or secure it but continuing the war with vigour? Viewing the continuance of hostilities in this light, the successes of the French become less formidable; the farther the war removes from their own territory, infinitely the more expensive it becomes. What but distance from its seat has rendered the efforts of the German powers so exhausting? The enemy by advancing will feel the same debility, and the necessity of raising, marching, and maintaining, more numerous forces will be in proportion to the extent of their frontier. Supposing the greatest successes, still this immensity of expence will remain; assignats must be multiplied more than ever, and the event will depend on the people being content to receive them: but, at all hazards, it appears more prudent, and, in the long run, more economical, to try this great political experiment, which is so much in our power to try, rather than submit to a peace concluded at a moment which makes the enemy masters of the terms.

Assignats, founded on the proscription of the precious metals, would lose their efficacy when the frontier of France becomes so extended by conquests, that every operation of the war is at a distance from the people accustomed to depend on them; but, while the Convention regard the metals as the sinews of war, and yet deluge their people with new paper perpetually depressed in value, they

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ground their successes abroad on the ruin they disseminate at home; triumph on the Rhine, by starving on the Rhone, and gather laurels in distant climes, while misery and want pervade like a pestilence the interior of what once was France. The farther they push their conquests the weaker (provided the war continues) must be their defence and the more languid their attacks, which have figured of late, not only from the magnitude of their force, but also for want of the union of those troops that might have opposed them. Let them advance and penetrate the deserts of Westphalia, they will find, what they never yet failed to find from Hanover to Bohemia, their *paths of glory leading to the grave.*

The plunder of conquered provinces will do much for individuals, but little for the state; Pichegru, Jourdan, and a hundred others, may grow rich, but the eternal mill must grind assignats faster than ever, and consequently wretchedness and oppression be the tenants of the fields of France, while the French arms are in their highest glory.

Another campaign may cost Britain twenty millions perhaps of debt. Double the supposition, call it forty, or fifty, or any other sum: were it to be expended in a war of ambition, or with any view but that of national safety and inde-

pendence, an honest man would not vote as many shillings: but the question at present is of another complexion; the late manifestation of the French power is too tremendous to be considered but with alarm and terror. The independence of Europe is at stake; and, if the fortune of the war be not changed before a negotiation for peace, the terms will be the dictates of imposing superiority on one side and the acceptance on the other, a confession of eternal imbecility; resistance vain, submission necessary.

Give back our islands, re-establish our power in India, yield to every demand that America can imagine, restore Corsica, receive on our own terms the organ of our will at London; send away the emigrants, acknowledge the Republic, and never allow a Bourbon to set foot on your shore, do this, and we will be content to retain Savoy and fix the Rhine as the barrier of our empire.

Compare the futurity that would grow out of such a peace with the evils of expending fifty or even a hundred millions of solid wealth to measure with the fabrication of paper-moonshine in France. This kingdom would bear the burthen of such an addition to her debt, with a decline probably not perceptible in any one branch of her prosperity: How would she bear the consequences

sequences of a peace dictated by the Convention?
or, rather, how resist, in the future and speedy
wars that would spring from the indignity of such
submission?

THE END.

